MEREDITH FINCH • IG GUARA
image
15
ROSE

The Story So Far...

In the land of Ttereve, magical ability is a death sentence.

With Fel's illness, and the loss of Rose and Thorne, the bonds of shared purpose that held the rebel alliance together begin to fracture. Will the iron resolve of Ila be enough to push them through to victory?

Now a prisoner, Rose finds herself in a desperate situation, unable to use the power she has only just come to understand, as she comes face to face with the true horror behind the throne.

Unaware that the Guardian she searches for is being held in her own dungeons, a furious Drucilla must determine who she's fighting against before she loses everything she has fought to achieve.

Betrayal and deceit walk hand-in-hand in the next gripping chapter of ROSE.

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THE REBEL CAMP.
MMMM... NO...NOT GONNA...
SHHHH, THERE NOW, MY BOY. JUST A COUPLE MORE SIPS AND I WILL LET YOU SLEEP.
WE 'AVE T' GET OUTTA HERE!
HE'S COMIN' FER US!
NO ONE IS COMING FOR ANYONE. IT IS JUST YOU AND I.
YOU ARE SAFE.
N' ONE'S SAFE...

~SIGH~ FATHER, WE NEED--
FEL WAS RIGHT. A FOOL I WAS NOT TO HAVE FIGURED OUT IT WAS YOU ALL ALONG...
THE WAR...THE DROUGHT...AND NOW, THE PLAGUE...I LET MY NEED FOR VENGEANCE BLIND ME TO THE TRUTH...NO ONE WOMAN COULD POSSIBLY BE RESPONSIBLE FOR SO MUCH EVIL WITHOUT HELP.
BUT YOU HAVE ALWAYS BEEN ONE TO PREY ON THE WEAK...THE LOST...
...THE DYING.

BUT I AM NOT WEAK.
AWWWWWCK!
AND I AM NO LONGER LOST.
AND I AM NOT YET READY...
...TO DIE!
CRAAAAKKKKOWWWW
POOMPF
THANK YOU, MY FRIEND.
THUD

THE CITY OF VENTA BELGARUM.
THE SEWERS, ARTUS? YOU REALLY COULDN'T HAVE COME UP WITH ANOTHER WAY INTO THE CITY?
OH SURE, THERE ARE LOTS OF WAYS WE COULD HAVE GOTTEN INTO THE CITY...
...I JUST THOUGHT THIS WOULD BE THE MOST FUN.
MAYBE IF SOMEONE DIDN'T HAVE A BOUNTY ON HIS HEAD...

IF MEMORY SERVES, THIS COMES OUT DIRECTLY BEHIND MY MOTHER'S HOUSE.
SHOULD I BOTHER TO ASK WHY YOU HAVE THE SEWERS COMMITTED TO MEMORY?
PART OF BEING A PHYSICIAN IS LEARNING HOW DISEASE IS SPREAD.
MY MOTHER FELT VERY STRONGLY THAT THE WAYS IN WHICH WE DEAL WITH OUR--
LOOK OUT!

SPLOOOSH!
NOT-ONE-WORD!
I WOULDN'T DREAM OF IT.

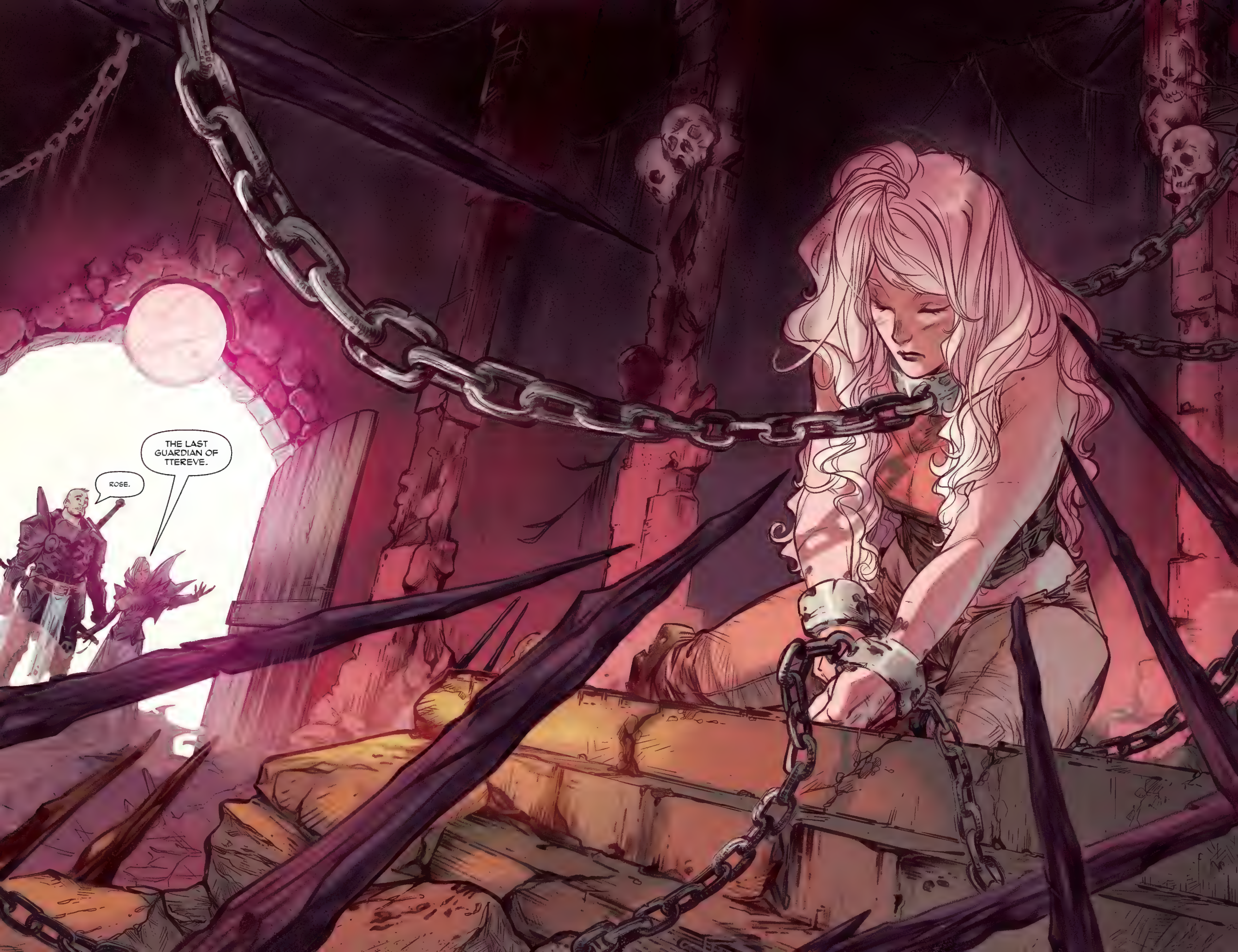
WHAT'S TAKING SO LONG? WE'RE TOO EXPOSED OUT HERE.
THE LOCK SEEMS TO BE FROZEN. WE NEED SOME SORT OF LUBRICANT TO--
CLANCK!
UM, YES. OR THAT COULD WORK, TOO.
JUST GET INSIDE BEFORE SOMEONE SEES US.

LOOK AT THIS PLACE! HOW IN THE BLAZES ARE WE GOING TO FIND ANYTHING IN THIS MESS?
MMMMM.
I MEAN, WHAT THE HELL ARE WE EVEN LOOKING FOR?!
HEY!

GIVE ME THAT!
LOOK! I KNOW YOU WANT TO HELP FEL, I KNOW YOU'RE WORRIED ABOUT ROSE, BUT YOU'RE NOT THE ONLY ONE WHO HAS SUFFERED.
DRUCILLA MURDERED MY MOTHER!
THIS HOUSE IS ALL I HAVE LEFT OF HER, AND IF WE'RE GOING TO FIND THE ANSWER TO THE PLAGUE, THEN IT'LL BE HERE. BECAUSE OF MY MOTHER!
SO, IF YOU WANT TO HELP YOUR FRIEND...
SORRY, ARTUS. I DIDN'T KNOW.
I JUST HOPE IT'S HERE.

YOU WANTED TO SEE ME, MY QUEEN?
SIR DANTE. THE LOYAL KNIGHT.
EVEN WHEN WE WERE YOUNG, BEFORE I WAS QUEEN, I HAVE ALWAYS KNOWN I COULD COUNT ON YOU.
WE GO BACK A LONG WAY, YOU AND I, MMMMH?
YOUR MAJESTY, I--

COME. I HAVE SOMETHING VERY SPECIAL I WANT TO SHARE WITH YOU.
YEARS OF MY FATHER'S LENIENCY MADE THIS COUNTRY AND ITS PEOPLE SOFT.
WE BARGAINED AWAY OUR RESOURCES, OUR PEOPLE...OUR PRINCESSES, INSTEAD OF TAKING WHAT WAS RIGHTFULLY OURS!
AND WE IGNORED OUR MOST POWERFUL ASSET...THE GREAT KHATS AND THEIR MAGIC.
BUT ALL THAT IS ABOUT TO CHANGE. BECAUSE, AFTER ALL THESE YEARS, THE KEY TO THAT POWER IS FINALLY IN MY HANDS.


THE LAST GUARDIAN OF TTEREVE.
ROSE.

CONGRATULATIONS ON HER CAPTURE, MY QUEEN.
I SHOULD HAVE KNOWN THAT I WAS NOT THE ONLY WEAPON IN YOUR ARSENAL.
≥HAHA≤ OH, SIMON. INDEED, YOU TRULY WERE THE VERY LEAST OF THEM.
NEVERTHELESS, I AM GIVING YOU THE HONOR OF WITNESSING MY ULTIMATE TRIUMPH.

THAT IS...IF HE DOESN'T KILL YOU FIRST.
SCREEEEEEEEEE
MY QUEEN, I DON'T...?
POOR, SIMPLE SIMON. YOU SHOULD HAVE STUCK TO KILLING. TREACHERY IS A GAME THAT SHOULD ONLY BE PLAYED BY THE CLEVER.
RRRRRRRRRRR

TIME'S UP, ARTUS. I'VE SEEN THREE PATROLS GO BY IN THE LAST FIVE MINUTES ALONE.
I KNOW IT'S HERE SOMEWHERE.
IF WE DON'T LEAVE NOW, WE AREN'T GOING TO BE ALIVE LONG ENOUGH TO WORRY ABOUT THE PLAGUE. OR ANYTHING ELSE.
NO. WAIT. THIS IS IT!
NOT A MOMENT TOO SOON. WE'VE GOT COMPANY.

BAM
BAM
BAM
OPEN UP, REBEL. WE KNOW YOU'RE IN THERE.
AH, HELL!
THERE SHOULD BE SOMETHING AROUND HERE I CAN USE TO--
I'M TRULY SORRY, ARTUS.
THWACK
BUT SAVING FEL'S LIFE IS TOO IMPORTANT TO RISK LETTING YOU FALL INTO DRUCILLA'S HANDS.

...MMMMHHH...
WHERE AM... WHAT...?
BJARKE. HOW DID YOU...? HOW LONG HAVE I BEEN UNCONSCIOUS?
FEL! FEL IS IN THERE!

NO...NO...NO!
NO!

YOU THOUGHT I DIDN'T KNOW? YOU ALWAYS WERE SO EASY TO READ... TO MANIPULATE.
YOUR DEFORMITY MAKES YOU VULNERABLE TO EVEN A SINGLE SMILE FROM A PRETTY FACE?
AND I SUPPOSE SHE'S PRETTY ENOUGH... FOR AN INSIPID WAIF.
I, ON THE OTHER HAND, PREFER MY TOYS TO BE A LITTLE MORE... EXHILARATING.
S-N-N-NNNRRLLL

SEEING WHAT YOU HAVE DONE TO ROSE...TO THORNE...
...IT ONLY CONFIRMS THAT YOU HAVE HELD THIS LAND IN YOUR EVIL GRIP FOR FAR TOO LONG, DRUCILLA.
BUT IF I HAVE LEARNED ANYTHING FROM THIS "WAIF"...
...IT'S THAT YOU CANNOT REPAY EVIL *WITH* EVIL.
DON'T WORRY, SIMON. YOUR DEATHS WILL BE REPAYMENT ENOUGH.

KILL THEM!
SIMON... DON'T...

NEXT MONTH

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1

• WHITTA • ROBERTSON •

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OLIVER

SNEAK PREVIEW

image

THREE YEARS LATER.
OLIVER!
GET BACK HERE, YOU LITTLE MAGGOT!
ABOUT TIME WE HAD THIS LITTLE CHAT.

SON OF A...
BLOODY... LITTLE...BRAT.
NOW WHERE DO YOU THINK YOU'RE GOING?

OLIVER #1 AVAILABLE JANUARY 2019

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